

VIVAT REX GEORGIUS.

"THE HOPE THAT THE KING WILL BE RESTORED TO HIS PEOPLE."

The hopes and fears of the Empire during the past weeks have been centred round the sick bed of its King, for it is realised, even far beyond the boundaries of the British Realms, how supremely precious is the life in the balance. Indeed, probably never in the history of a reigning monarch, has anxiety been so world-wide and heartfelt, and it is with deep thankfulness we record the latest pronouncement of the King's medical advisers, given we may be sure, with a full sense of its gravity: "Improvement and progress are taking place slowly, but surely enough to justify the hope that the King will be restored to his people."

It has been the custom of the British people, since early times to add to the title of their Sovereign words descriptive of an outstanding quality or characteristic, which often were very apt. In our own times, Victoria the Good, and Edward the Peace-Maker at once come to mind. We venture to think that history will endorse the description of King George V as "George the Well - Beloved," and it is this characteristic of the reigning Monarch which has done so much to ensure the stability of the British Throne at a time when Crowns have been displaced and Monarchies disrupted. In the testing time of the Great War the King still further endeared himself to his people. With dignity and simplicity he passed among them, and in hospitals at home and in France, His Majesty gave constant evidence of his sympathy with the sick and wounded, speaking words of cheer which helped them on their thorny path up the hill of difficulty, and he was at pains to honour the dead by placing wreaths on their memorials, as is seen in our picture. It will indeed

be remembered that the King's last public action before his illness was to attend the Memorial Service at the Cenotaph in Whitehall on November 10th and place a wreath there in honour of our dead soldiers.

What wonder then, when he himself was stricken with serious illness, that the Nation realised the deep hold His Majesty had upon its affections, that hundreds of all classes waited patiently in the damp and cold to read the bulletins as the shadows deepened, and their serious import was realised.

The distinguished medical men who are in attendance upon His Majesty have adopted the method of supplementing the bulletins by a full statement to the Medical Press as to the King's condition and progress, and such a statement was published in the *Lancet* of December 22nd.

We publish it *in extenso* because we know that our colleagues all over the world are anxious for the details of His Majesty's illness.

An Authoritative Statement.

After more than four weeks of illness the King's condition still demands and obtains the first place in our thoughts. Bringing a sense of deep strain into the lives of his subjects and fellow-countrymen, it has united them by their desire for his speedy recovery. So immediate and definite a change, from the nature of the

case, was more than could be expected, but the following authoritative statement addressed to the medical profession shows that this long and dangerous illness has reached a stage where there is a reasonable probability of improvement. It is dated Wednesday, Dec. 22nd, at 8 p.m.

There are signs that the King's illness is producing in the public mind a sensitiveness, only too natural, caused by weeks of anxiety, and producing too easily alarm and therefore distress, both of which it is most desirable to avoid. Doctors in their various spheres can



HIS MAJESTY THE KING
HONOURING HIS BROTHERS AT ARMS.

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